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DIA INTELLIGENCE APPRAISAL

India-Pakistan Situation

25X1D

1. (TS) Although fighting continues in East Pakistan, steps to negotiate a settlement are under way.

3. (S/NFD) Meanwhile, according to the US Defense Attaché in New Delhi, an Indian military intelligence officer has admitted that army units remain in East Pakistan. He denied, however, that New Delhi's forces were involved in actions near Rangpur, Sylhet and Feni but admitted that two infantry battalions and an armored regiment were in East Pakistan near Jessore and Hilli. The attache commented that there is a growing credibility gap between fact and Indian statements regarding the military situation and estimates that at least one Indian infantry brigade was involved in each area of fighting.

25X1C

4. (S/NFD) Indian Minister of Defense Jagjivan Ram disclosed that the cabinet is concerned that the crisis in East Pakistan will become internationalized,

25X1C

This concern and Pakistani restraint in the face of provocation is likely prompting the Indians to reassess their current policy of exerting maximum military pressure in East Pakistan to resolve the crisis. UN involvement would tend to disclose the extent of their aid to the Mukti Bahini and reduce New Delhi's control of the situation. India has consistently refused to consider proposals for UN observers on its eastern border with East Pakistan, maintaining that the rebels constitute an internal Pakistani problem and not the concern of the international forum.

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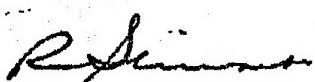
TOP SECRET UMBRA

5. (S/NFD) There has been no significant reaction from either the Chinese or the USSR, despite recent intensification of the crisis. The amount of media attention devoted to the crisis by Peking, however, has risen during the past 10 days. The Chinese are continuing to encourage a peaceful settlement of the dispute and have expressed some support for Pakistani President Yahya Khan's proposal for disengagement. The Chinese have not tried to play up any threat to their own security, and Indian actions have been portrayed as "an invasion," "military provocations," and even "armed aggression." At the same time, the Pakistanis have been described as holding their own, implying that they do not need direct assistance.

6. (S/NFD) Meanwhile, the USSR has apparently dropped all pretense of impartiality. Its press is supporting the Indian cause. A recent TASS release blames the situation on Islamabad and states that the Pakistani authorities must stop repressing the East Pakistan population and create conditions for the safe return of refugees. Moscow has also criticized US motives in the crisis.

7. (S/NFD) India's reported acceptance of the Iranian offer of good offices as a means to mediate the crisis, represents a radical departure from their previous course and was unexpected. New Delhi may have concluded that its strategy of military pressure to force Pakistani negotiation was not succeeding. Moreover, they may also have viewed the internationalization of the crisis as inevitable. This would have meant a minor triumph for Yahya and the loss of prestige and control of the situation for India. The Iranian offer will preclude internationalization and provide a means for both sides to retain their prestige by appearing to be reasonable and sincere in their efforts to solve the crisis.

Approved by:



R. Shultz
Major General, USAF
Director for

2 Dec 71

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 11740 01 OF 02 271342Z

41
ACTION SS-25
INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 (CIAE-00,) W

063388

O 270932Z NOV 71
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1716
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL DACCA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

SECRET SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 11740

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER J. K. ATAL
REF: ISLAMABAD 8631 (NOTAL) ISLAMABAD 10927 PARA 6, ISLAMABAD
11484 (NOTAL), AND ISLAMABAD 11734

1. SUMMARY. CONVERSATION WITH INDIAN HICOMER ATAL REFLECTED HIS SINCERE DESIRE EFFECT RAPPROCHMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN. HE STATED HE WOULD PROPOSE TO GOI THAT IT ACKNOWLEDGE AMENABILITY TO IDEA PROSCRIBED AWAMI LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES MEETING WITH GOP REPRESENTATIVES IN TEHRAN OR ELSEWHERE FOR PURPOSE INSTITUTING DIALOGUE FOCUSING ON POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. CONSIDERSMUJIBUR RAHMAN NO LONGER IMPORTANT AND RELEASE NOT PRECONDITION TO DIALOGUE. EMPHASIZED THAT GOI DOES NOT WANT BREAK-UP OF PAKISTAN AND THAT POLITICAL SETTLEMENT COULD BE WITHIN CONCEPT OF LOOSE FEDERATION. AGREED TO INFORM ME SOONEST OF FOI'S REACTION. I AGREED TO CONVEY SUBSTANCE OUR CONVERSATION TO YAHYA.
END SUMMARY.

2. LATE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON INDIAN HICOMER J. K. ATAL ASKED TO PAY PROTOCOL CALL UPON ME AT 0900 HOURS LOCAL TIME SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27. I MET WITH HIM AT MY RESIDENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS PROPOSED SCHEDULE.

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3. THE HICOMER BEGAN HIS CONVERSATION BY STATING THAT HE BELIEVED HE HAD BUT ONE MISSION AND THAT WAS TO EFFECT RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN HIS COUNTRY AND THE COUNTRY TO WHICH HE WAS ACCREDITED, AND TO DO THIS SOONEST. HE HAD BEGUN HIS MISSION, HE SAID, BY A LENGTHY CONVERSATION WITH AZRES. YAHYA, WHOM HE DISCOVERED NOT RPT NOT TO BE QTE AN OGRE UNQTE AS REFLECTED IN THE INDIAN PRESS AND AS CHARACTERIZED BY VARIOUS GOI OFFICIALS AT HIGH LEVELS. RATHER, HE SAID, HE FOUND HIM TO BE, THOUGH BOUND BY THE COMPLEXES OF A MILITARY MIND, EXTREMELY AMENABLE TO SUGGESTION AND MOST DESIROUS OF AMELIORATING THE TENSIONS EXTANT IN THE SUBCONTINENT. AS AN EXAMPLE OF YAHYA'S COOPERATIVENESS, ATAL REPORTED, HE HAD CONCLUDED HIS CONVERSATION WITH YAHYA WITH A DISCUSSION OF YAHYA'S FORTHCOMING EID MESSAGE, WHICH IN FINAL PUBLISHED FORM CONTAINED CERTAIN STATEMENTS ACTUALLY DICTATED BY ATAL AT THE TIME FOR INCLUSION THEREIN.

4. AFTER CAPABLY PRESENTING THE GOI LINE ON CURRENT SITUATION, ATAL TOLD ME THAT HE HAD DEPARTED ISLAMABAD ON THE 19TH TO CARRY A REPORT OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH YAHYA DIRECTLY TO MRS. GANDHI. HE SAID THAT HIS CONVERSATION WITH HIS PM HAD NOT BEEN ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF TIMING AND ADVERSE FAST-MOVING EVENTS WHICH CONTINUED TO CLOUD THE ISSUE. HE SAID, HOWEVER, HE HAD RETURNED ON NOV. 25 WITH A MESSAGE FROM MRS. GANDHI WHICH CONSISTED OF THREE MAIN POINTS: (A) THE GOI DID NOT RPT NOT WANT WAR WITH PAKISTAN; (B) THE GOI WAS NOT INTERESTED IN AND DID NOT DESIRE THE PARTITION OF PAKISTAN; AND (C) IT WAS GOI'S CONCLUSION THAT THE EAST PAKISTANI REFUGEES IN INDIA WOULD RETURN TO THEIR HOMES ONLY IF THE GOP EFFECTED RECONCILIATION WITH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE. ATAL PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED THE FACT THAT INDIA WAS NOT SEEKING A BREAK-UP OF PAKISTAN AND SAID THAT HE WAS GOING TO MAKE CLEAR THIS POINT WITH SULTAN KHAN WHEN HE SAW HIM THIS AFTERNOON. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS SURPRISED THAT THE NAME MUJIBUR RAHMAN HAD NOT ENTERED INTO THE MESSAGE INASMUCH AS BOTH HIS PM AND FOREIGN MINISTER HAD REPEATEDLY MADE SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S RELEASE A PRECONDITION TO ANY DIALOGUE TOWARDS POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. ATAL DISAFFIRMED THIS AS REFLECTING CURRENT THINKING AND SAID, IN CONFIDENCE, THAT AS FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED HE THOUGHT MUJIBUR WAS A QTE STUPID FOOL UNQTE. HE ADDED THAT, IN HIS OPINION, MUJIBUR AND BHUTTO WERE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRESENT DEBACLE. REFERRING TO THE TYPE OF

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RDCONCILIATION WHICH WAS CONTEMPLATED IN MRS. GANDHI'S
COMMUNICATION TO YAHYA, ATAL SAID THAT HE ENVSAGED SOMETHING IN
THE NATURE OF A LOOSE CONFEDERATION ASBEING TOTALLY ACCEPTABLE,
ADDING THAT IT MOST CERTAINLY DID NOT INCLUDE INDEPENDENCE. IN THIS
CONNECTION I TOLD HIM OF MY CONVERSATION WITH YAHYA ON NOV. 18
DURING WHICH YAHYA HAD ADVIS CD ME THAT PROVISIONS OF THE FORTH-
COMING CONSTITUTION WOULD HIGHLIGHT THE DEGREE OF QTE FEDERATED
INDEPENDENCE UNQTE WHICH EAST PAKISTAN WOULD HAVE UNDER IT. ATAL
SEIZED UPON THE WORDS QTE FEDERATED INDEPENDENCE UNQTE,
SAYING THE CHOICE THEREOF WAS PARTICULARLY FORTUITOUS BECAUSE IT
GAVE THE WEST QTE FEDERATION UNQTE AND THE EAST QTE INDEPENDENCE
UNQTE. (ISLAMABAD 11484 PARA 6.)

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 11740 02 OF 02 271042Z

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ACTION SS-25
INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 (CIAE) W

063902O 270948Z NOV 71
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1717
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL DACCA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 11740

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR

5. AS THE DISCUSSION MOVED FROM THE CATACLYSMIC HOLOCAUST WHICH A WAR WOULD BRING TO THE SUBCONTINENT, ATAL SAIF UHAT HE FELT THE ONLY WAY TO PREVENT ITS OCCURRENCE WAS FOR A DIALOGUE TO ENSUE IMMEDIATELY BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOP AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PROSCRIBED AWAMI LEAGUE NOW IN INDIA AND ELSEWHERE. I EXPLAINED TO ATAL THAT THE U.S., AS A FRIEND TO BOTH PAKISTAN AND

INDIA, HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING, ALBEIT WITH UTMOST QUIETUDE, TO BRING ABOUT THE INSTITUTION OF PRECISELY SUCH A DIALOGUE, AND THAT I WAS SOMEWHAT SURPRISED THAT HE WAS UNAWARE THAT PRES. YAHYA HAD SPECIFICALLY ADVISED ME THAT HE WAS AGREEABLE TO THE IDEA, AND HIS REPRESENTATIVES WOULD MEET WITH BANGLA DESH REPRESENTATIVES, PROVIDED THESE HAD NOT BEEN CATEGORIZED AS FELONS. (REFTEL ISLAMABAD 8631 AND ISLAMABAD 10927 PARA 6.) I WENT ON TO SAY THAT ATTEMPTS SO FAR TO BRING THIS TO FRUITION HAD BEEN SUBJECT TO CERTAIN IMPEDIMENTS WHICH WERE NOT OF GOP ORIGIN.

6. ATAL THEN STATED THAT HE WAS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT HIS PM WOULD ENDORSE THE CON WAIDVQ#ENCOURAGING CERTAIN OF THE AWAMI

LEAGUE LEADERS TO ENGAGE IN THE SUGGESTED SCENARIO. I TOLD HIM THAT I HOPED THAT HE WAS RIGHT IN HIS ASSUMPTION, BUT THAT

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MRS. GANDHI AND HER ENTOURAGE, DURING THEIR WASHINGTON VISITATION,
HAD BEEN APPRISED OF THE FACT THAT YAHYA WAS NOT ONLY AMENABLE BUT
WAS DESIROUS OF SUCH A MEETING. ATAL'S REPLY WAS TO THE EFFECT
THAT BOTH SHE AND MEMBERS OF HER GROUP, WHILE IN WASHINGTON, WERE
FETTERED BY THE RESTRAINTS OF DIPLOMACY, BUT THAT QTE THINGS MAY
HAVE CHANGED UNQTE AND, AT ANY RATE, HE WAS TALKING TO ME QTE MAN
TO MAN UNQTE.

7. THE CONVERSATION CONCLUDED WITH THE AGREEMENT THAT HE WOULD
IMMEDIATELY CONTACT GOI AND ASCERTAIN WHYAHER OR NOT IT WOUG BE
AMENABLE TO ENCOURAGING A MEETING AFORESAID, THE LOCALE OF WHICH
COULD BE ANY PLACE AGREED UPON. HOWEVER, ATAL OPINED THAT HE
BELIEVED TEHRAN MIGHT BE THE MOST LIKELY SITUS SINCE THE
SHAN WAS KNOWN WELL AND FAVORABLY BY BOTH PAKISTAN AND INDIA. ON
MY PART, I SAID I WOULD AT ONCE NOTIFY MY GOVERNMENT AND WOULD
ATTEMPT SOONEST TO GET IN TOUCH WITH PRES. YAHYA FOR THE PURPOSE
OF CONVEYING TO HIM A SUMMARY OF OUR CONVERSATION. ATAL TOOK
HIS DEPARTURE VOICING THE UNDERSTANDING THAT HE WOULD LET ME KNOW
SOONEST OF ANY REPLY FROM NEW DELHI.

8. COMMENT: WHILE THIS MIGHT BE THE BREAK-THROUGH WHICH WE HAVE
BEEN LOOKING FOR, I COUNSEL AGAINST ELATION SINCE I HAVE A VERY
STRONG SUSPICION THAT ATAL AND KAUL ARE MILES APART IN THEIR
THINKING. (SEE CALCUTTA 2901.) GP-2.
FARLAND

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 11759 300600Z

18
ACTION SS-25
INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 (CIAE-00,) W

077740 (3)

P 290740Z NOV 71
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1726
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

India/Pak

SECRET ISLAMABAD 11759

EXDIS

CORRECTED COPY (TEXT: PARAGRAPH 2.)

SUBJ YAHYA'S REACTION TO INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER
J.K. ATAL'S SUGGESTION OF MEETING WITH BANGLA
DESH REPRESENTATIVES

REF ISLAMABAD 11740

1. I MET WITH PRES. YAHYA IN HIS RESIDENCE AT 1930 HRS. LOCAL SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27; THE CONVERSATION LASTED UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 2130 HRS. AMONG OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH WERE DISCUSSED AND WHICH ARE BEING REPORTED SEPTELS, I CONVEYED TO YAHYA, FULLY AND COMPLETELY, THE INDIAN HICOMER J.K. ATAL'S PROPOSAL TO SECURE FROM THE GOI AN AFFIRMATIVE POSTURE ON THE IDEA OF CERTAIN PROSCRIBED AWAMI LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES MEETING WITH GOP REPRESENTATIVES IN TEHRAN OR ELSEWHERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTITUTING A DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. I ALSO CONVEYED TO YAHYA THE OTHER ASPECTS OF MY CONVERSATION WITH ATAL AS REPORTED IN REPTEL.

2. YAHYA SAID THAT, IN HIS OPINION, ATAL IS EITHER QUITE AMAZINGLY UNINFORMED OR WAS PLAYING A QUITE MOST MISCHIEVOUS UNQUOTE ROLE AT THIS PARTICULARLY

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CRITICAL TIME. OF THESE TWO PROPOSITIONS, YAHYA SAID
THAT, IN HIS JUDGEMENT, ATAL IS HONEST IN HIS EFFORTS
AND APPARENTLY HAD NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY BRIEFED BY HIS
GOVERNMENT BEFORE ASSUMING HIS POST HERE. I EXPRESSED
MY AGREEMENT, SAYING THAT I FELT THAT ATAL WAS SINCERE
IN HIS DESIRE TO EFFECT RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN INDIA
AND PAKISTAN.

3. RETURNING TO THE SUBSTANTIVE PORTION OF THE CONVER-
SATION, YAHYA SAID HIS POSITION REMAINED UNCHANGED AS
HERETOFORE CONVEYED TO ME, I.E., HE WAS FULLY AGREEABLE
TO THE IDEA, AND THAT HIS REPRESENTATIVES WOULD MEET
WITH BANGLA DESH REPRESENTATIVES, PROVIDED THESE
INDIVIDUALS HAD NOT BEEN CATEGORIZED AS FELONS. (SEE
ISLAMABAD 8631 AND ISLAMABAD 10926, PARA 6.) YAHYA
ADDED THAT, SHOULD SUCH A MEETING BE ARRANGED, QTE
THEY WILL NOT FIND ME UNRESPONSIVE UNQTE. GP-3.
FARLAND

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 11796 291330Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO O CT-01 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 (CIAE-00,) W
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O 291200Z NOV 71

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1740

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 11796

EXDIS

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER
ATAL, NOVEMBER 29

REF: ISLAMABAD 11740

1. DURING YUGOSLAV NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION NOV. 29, I HAD OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO INDIAN HICOMER AND ADVISED HIM THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING, I HAD CONVEYED, BOTH TO MY GOVERNMENT AND TO PRESIDENT YAHYA, THE PLAN OF ACTION WHICH HE HAD SUGGESTED ON NOV. 27. I TOLD HIM THAT PRESIDENT YAHYA'S REACTION WAS AFFIRMATIVE AND THAT I WAS MOST INTERESTED TO KNOW IF HE HAD RECEIVED WORD FROM GOI REVEALING WHETHER OR NOT IT WAS AMENABLE TO THE SCENARIO INCORPORATED IN HIS SUGGESTION.

2. TO MY UTTER AMAZEMENT, THE HICOMER SEEMED UNCERTAIN AS TO PRECISELY WHAT HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF OUR CONVERSATION, AND HE ASKED ME IF I WOULD PLEASE TELL HIM WHAT I HAD CONVEYED TO MY GOVERNMENT AND TO PRESIDENT YAHYA. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REACTION TO WHAT I HAD TO SAY WAS EQUALLY AMAZING. HE COMMENTED THAT HE THOUGHT THE IDEA WAS BASICALLY SOUND BUT THAT HE FELT IT WOULD TAKE ENTIRELY TOO LONG TO ACCOMPLISH; HENCE, HE AND HIS STAFF HAD BEEN FORMULATING SOMETHING NEWER

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AND MORE DRAMATIC. THIS NEW AND DRAMATIC IDEA ENVISIONED
AN IMMEDIATE FORMATION OF A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT BY YAHYA,
COMMITANT WITH A TRANSFER OF POWER; IT, IN TURN, WOULD
FORTHWITH INSTITUTE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE BANGLA DESH
REPS SOONEST. HE ASKED FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH ME TO
DISCUSS THE MATTER MORE FULLY AND I AGREED TO SEE HIM
NOV. 30 AT 1030 HOURS.

3. BEFORE DEPARTING THE SOCIAL EVENT, I OVERHEARD THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER ATTEMPTING TO SELL HIS QTE NEW IDEA
UNQTE TO ALL AND SUNDRY PRESENT. ALSO, ERE MY DEPARTURE,
I WAS INDIVIDUALLY APPROACHED BY THE BRITISH AND
CAN ADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONERS, AND BY THE SWEDISH AND
YUGOSLAV AMBASSADORS, EACH CONFIDING TO ME HIS VIEW
THAT THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER MAY WELL BE LESS
THAN A RESPONSIBLE DIPLOMAT.

4. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF THIS CONVERSATION TODAY, I
AM FORCED TO REASSESS MY OPINION OF ATAL FORMED
DURING MY CONVERSATION WITH HIM NOV. 27 AND REPORTED
REFTEL.

GP-3. FARLAND

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 11847 010433Z

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ACTION SS-25
INFO OCT-01 (CIAE-00,) W

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P 301240Z NOV 71
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1768
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

SECRET ISLAMABAD 11847

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TO TEXT NBRD PARA ONE)

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER ATAL,
NOV 30

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 11796; B) ISLAMABAD 11759; C) ISLAMABAD 11740

1. SUMMARY: INDIAN HICOMER ATAL CALLED ON ME THIS MORNING TO ASK PRESIDENT YAHYA'S REACTITN TO HIS PROPOSAL THAT THE GOP MEET WITH AWAMI LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES IN NEUTRAL LOCATION WITH THE PURPOSE OF BEGINNING DIALOGUE LEADING TO POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. HE SAID HE HAD PASSED SUBSTANCE OUR NOV 27 CONVERSATION TO NEW DELHI (REFTEL C) AND WHILE HE HAD RECEIVED NO AFFIRMATION OR DENIAL OF HIS PROPTISAL, HE HAD BEEN ASKED BY HIS GOVERNMENT TO FIND OUT AT WHAT LEVEL GOP WOULD AGREE TO TALKS. I SAID IN ESSENCE YAHYA HAD TOLD ME IN OUR NOV 27 MEETING (REFTEL B) THAT GOP PREPARED TO SEND HIGHEST LEVEL REPRESENTATION COMMENSURATE WITH STATUS OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER SIDE. ATAL ALSO INFORMED ME HE HAD DROPPED PROPOSAL HE WAS PROMULGATING YESTERDAY AND OF HIS PLANS SEND AIDE MEMOIRE ON CURRENT SITUATION TO FONSEC SULTAN KHAN. END SUMMARY

2. INIDAN HICOMER ATLA CALLED ON ME TO FOLLOW UP OUR CONVERSATIONS OF NOV 27 AND NOV 29 (REFTELS A

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AND C). HE SAID HE HAD PASSED SUBSTANCE OUR FIRST CONVERSATION TO NEW DELHI WHICH THUS FAR HAD NOT AFFIRMED OR DENIED HIS PROPOSAL FOR GOP/AWAMI LEAGUE TALKS BUT HAD ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE LEVEL OF TALKS GOP WOULD AGREE TO. I REPLIED YAHYA HAD TOLD ME IN ESSENCE THAT GOP PREPARED SEND HIGHEST LEVEL REPRESENTATION COMMENSURATE WITH STATUS AWAMI LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVES. I ADDED THAT YAHYA HAD EXCLUDED MEETING WITH THOSE CONVICTED OF TREASON OR MURDER. ATAL ASKED IF THIS WOULD EXCLUDE BANGLA DESH PM TAJUDDIN AHMAD FROM THE DISCUSSIONS. I REPLIED I DID NOT KNOW BUT SUGGESTED THAT THE BEST WAY TO PROCEED WOULD BE TO PROPOSE SOME AWAMI LEAGUE NAMES TO DETERMINE THE GOP'S REACTION.

3. ATAL ALSO ASKED MY OPINION ON WHETHER TALKS SHOULD BE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED OR HELD SECRETLY. I SAID SECRET TALKS SEEMED THE ONLY WAY TO PRECLUDE ANY FALSE EXPECTATIONS OR HOPES.

4. I THEN ASKED HICOMER THE STATUS OF HIS PROPOSAL OF YESTERDAY THAT GOP IMMEDIATELY FORM A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT AND THAT THIS GOVERNMENT BEGIN FORTHWITH CONVERSATIONS WITH BANGLA DESH REPS. HE BRUSHED OFF SUBJECT, SAYING HE HAD RECONSIDERED THIS PROPOSAL SINCE IT WOULD TAKE TOO MUCH TIME AND HAD REVERTED TO HIS EARLIER PROPOSAL THAT THE DISCUSSIONS BE BETWEEN PRESENT GOP AND THE AWAMI LEAGUE.

5. HICOMER WENT ON TO REPEAT MESSAGE HE BROUGHT BACK FROM HIS VISIT WITH MRS. GANDHI IN NEW DELHI THAT GOI DID NOT WANT WAR WITH PAKISTAN; GOI WAS NOT INTERESTED IN AND DID NOT DESIRE PARTITION OF PAKISTAN; AND THAT IT WAS GOI'S CONCLUSION EAST PAKISTANI REFUGEES WOULD ONLY RETURN IF GOP EFFECTED RECONCILIATION WITH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF PEOPLE. HE SEEMED PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT THIS MESSAGE BE RECEIVED AND UNDERSTOOD BY PRESIDENT YAHYA. HE SAID HE HAD DELIVERED IT ORALLY TO FOREIGN SECRETARY SULTAN KHAN ON NOV 27 AND WAS PLANNING FOLLOW UP WITH A TOP SECRET AIDE MEMOIRE FOR THE FOREIGN SECRETARY TO PASS ON TO YAHYA SETTING OUT THE POINTS HE HAD ENUNCIATED.

6. ATAL THEN READ ME PORTIONS OF HIS AIDE MEMOIRE WHICH IN FACT WENT CONSIDERABLY BEYOND THREE POINTS THAT HE HAD

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 11847 010433Z
 OUTLINED TO REITERATE AT LENGTH INDIAN POSITION ON CURRENT SITUATION. SPECIFICALLY, AIDE MEMOIRE SUGGESTED THAT YAHYA MUST BEGIN IMMEDIATE TALKS WITH AWAMI LEAGUERS, ADDING THAT THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR A GOVERNMENT TO DO AND CITING AS AN EXAMPLE THE BRITISH TALKS WITH NEHRU PRIOR TO PARTITION. WHILE DISCLAIMING ANY INTENTION TO DICTATE TERMS OF A POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN AWAMI LEAGUE AND GOP, ADIE MEMOIRE WENT ON TO SAY IT WAS MRS. GANDHI'S FIRM OPINION THAT A SETTLEMENT COULD NOT BE REACHED UNLESS MUJIB WERE INCLUDED.

7. COMMENT: ATAL APPEARS WELL INTENTIONED, HOWEVER, IT BECOMING MORE AND MORE APPARENT THAT HE MAY NOT BE WELL INFORMED OF THE POSITION OF HIS GOVERNMENT OR THE HISTORY AND STATUS OF CURRENT INDO/PAK TENSIONS. THE AIDE MEMOIRE DESCRIBED ABOVE WHICH HE INTENDS TO DELIVER TO FONSEC AND WHICH HE ASKED ME TO URGE YAHYA TO READ CAREFULLY "WORD FOR WORD" CONTAINS ABSOLUTELY NO NEW INDIAN POSITIONS IN A MANNER WHICH YAHYA MAY FIND OFFENSIVE. IF IN FACT HE WANTS TO DEFUSE INDO/PAK TENSIONS, ATLA IS GOING TO HAVE TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING MORE VIABLE. HIS PROPOSAL FOR GOP/AWAMI LEAGUE TALKS COULD HELP, BUT HE SEEMS TO BE GOING AHEAD WITHOUT DEFINITE INSTRUCTIONS AND MAY NOT BE ABLE TO DELIVER EVEN IF PAKS AGREE. I PLAN, THEREFORE, TO BE CAUTIOUS IN PUSHING HIS IDEAS AS WELL AS HIS AIDE MEMOIRE WITH THE GOP.

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